

VZCZCXYZ0001
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHKT #0583 0591211
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 281211Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0525
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 3644
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 9274
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 4240
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 9316
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 3986
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 2226
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 0771
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 0472
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T KATHMANDU 000583

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR S/ES - PLEASE PASS TO THE SECRETARY
DEPT FOR D, P, SA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/28/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [PTER](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: CRITICAL AMMUNITION SHORTAGE

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty, Reasons, 1.4 (b/d).

One Bullet Per M-16

11. (S) Royal Nepal Army (RNA) Master General of Ordnance Major General Prakash Bahadur Basnyat told Emboff on February 28 that the RNA was running critically low on almost all types of ammunition. The RNA had 16,800 rounds of M-16 ammunition remaining in the depots for its 16,000 M-16s. In other words, the army is down to one round per U.S.-provided rifle. With only 130,000 rounds of INSAS ammunition in central stock and 25,000 INSAS weapons, the RNA had an average of 5.2 rounds per INSAS. After China had provided 7.62mm ammunition for self-loading rifles (SLRs), the RNA had only an average of 21 rounds per weapon, although the MGO noted that the SLRs were 35 years old and perhaps as many as half of the 32,000 weapons were inoperable. MG Basnyat added that the RNA had no other ammunition deliveries scheduled.

Other Ordnance Also In Short Supply

12. (S) The RNA is also dangerously low on munitions for close air support during missions when it wants to use its helicopters in battle. According to Basnyat, the RNA had less than 23 70mm rockets and only nine high explosive 51mm rockets. In terms of heavier ground weapons designed to support infantry troops in combat, the RNA was also running low on mortar rounds (only 317 rounds of 81mm mortars) and M203 grenade rounds. The RNA has 2,300 hand grenades remaining. The MGO commented that these numbers left nothing for training.

Comment

13. (S) These numbers and the lack of scheduled deliveries are alarming and we hope that the Maoists do not discover how low the RNA's stocks are. Unless something positive unexpectedly happens, pretty soon the M-16's we have provided to the RNA will be rendered useless. Shortly thereafter, the

Indian-supplied INSAS will suffer a similar fate. MG Basnyat told us this information informally and we do not believe COAS authorized the MGO to share this information. We also do not believe that the Indians are aware of this lack of ammunition.

MORIARTY